

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 3, 1997  
AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 7, 1997  
AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 3, 1997

**Senate Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 23**

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**Introduced by Senator Polanco  
(Coauthor: Senator Watson)**

February 24, 1997

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Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 23—Relative to minority enrollment in medical schools.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 23, as amended, Polanco. Minority enrollment in medical schools.

This measure would request the University of California medical schools to report to the Regents of the University of California and to the California Postsecondary Education Commission the current status of ethnic minority enrollment in their respective schools, as specified. The measure also would request the commission, *to the extent sufficient nonstate funds are available and in consultation with the California Research Bureau and the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development*, to develop recommendations for innovative strategies and incentive programs that will encourage physicians and other health care professionals to practice in geographic areas where health needs are underserved, as specified, and to issue a report to the Governor and the Legislature no later than June 30, 1998.

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, Recent data indicates that California's  
2 medical schools have experienced a 19-percent reduction  
3 in underrepresented minority enrollment between 1995  
4 and 1996; and

5 WHEREAS, This precipitous decline is inconsistent  
6 with both the spiraling growth of the state's  
7 underrepresented population, as well as with nationwide  
8 statistics that reveal a decline in minority enrollment in  
9 medical schools of only 5 percent over the same period;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, According to a May 1996 report in the New  
12 England Journal of Medicine, recent studies reveal that  
13 physicians who are members of minority groups serve a  
14 critical role in serving California's minority populations  
15 due to their proclivity for electing to practice in  
16 communities with high proportions of minority residents;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Data also indicates poor urban  
19 communities have fewer physicians per capita than do  
20 more affluent areas; and

21 WHEREAS, Even among the state's rural areas, which,  
22 according to survey data, have 40 percent fewer  
23 physicians overall than urban areas, the supply of  
24 physicians was found to be lowest in areas with high  
25 percentages of underrepresented minorities; and

26 WHEREAS, Access to medical care for all California  
27 residents and all communities regardless of  
28 considerations of race, income, or geography should be a  
29 high priority policy goal; now, therefore, be it

30 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the*  
31 *Assembly thereof concurring,* That the University of  
32 California medical schools report to the Regents of the  
33 University of California and the California Postsecondary  
34 Education Commission the current status of ethnic  
35 minority enrollment in their respective schools; and be it  
36 further

37 *Resolved,* That this report shall include information on  
38 the number of underrepresented students who have  
39 applied, been admitted, and enrolled during the period  
40 from 1985 to 1995, inclusive, as well as a summary of the



1 efforts made during this period to increase the  
2 representation of those student groups; and be it further

3 *Resolved*, That the State of California shall strive to  
4 broaden the diversity of enrollment in the area of primary  
5 care at the University of California medical schools; and  
6 be it further

7 *Resolved*, That the California Postsecondary Education  
8 Commission, *to the extent sufficient nonstate funds are*  
9 *available and* in consultation with the California Research  
10 Bureau and the Office of Statewide Health Planning and  
11 Development, shall develop recommendations for  
12 innovative strategies and incentive programs that will  
13 encourage physicians and other health care professionals  
14 to practice in geographic areas where health needs are  
15 underserved; and be it further

16 *Resolved*, That the California Postsecondary Education  
17 Commission, in developing its recommendations, shall  
18 assess the extent to which academic and administrative  
19 policies and programs currently employed in California's  
20 medical schools require modifications to achieve the goal  
21 of educational diversity and equal access to health  
22 professions for future physicians who are likely to provide  
23 health care to underserved California communities; and  
24 be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the California Postsecondary Education  
26 Commission shall consult with representatives of  
27 California medical schools, both public and private,  
28 educators representing other academic segments, health  
29 care professionals, economists, and experts from national  
30 associations and research centers for the purpose of  
31 determining factors that explain the reasons that health  
32 care professionals choose not to practice in underserved  
33 communities; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That it is the intent of the Legislature that the  
35 California Postsecondary Education Commission, in  
36 consultation with the California Research Bureau and the  
37 Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development,  
38 shall issue a report to the Governor and the Legislature  
39 containing its findings and recommendations regarding  
40 these matters no later than June 30, 1998; and be it further



1 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit  
2 copies of this resolution to the Governor, the University  
3 of California, the California Postsecondary Education  
4 Commission, the California Research Bureau, and the  
5 Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development.

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